

CANCER RESEARCH

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## Sullivan Smith serves summer fellowship at Mass General Hospital

DUXBURY - Sullivan Smith of Duxbury has spent this summer serving as a 2011 Alvan T. Viola D. Fuller-American Cancer Society Junior Research Fellow under the guidance of Katrin Tschop, Ph.D., a researcher at Massachusetts General Hospital's Center for Cancer Research in Charlestown. Smith is currently a senior working towards a degree in biology at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Conn.

As a 2011 Fuller Fellow, Smith received a grant from the American Cancer Society's New England Division to work on a project focusing on a tumor suppressor protein and its function within cancer cells. The lab is investigating which factors are the most important in mediating the effect of the protein and thus slowing down tumor growth. Smith explained that the research is a small step in the larger process of under-

standing the fundamentals of the disease in order to treat it more effectively.

While he has always been interested in research, Smith has not previously had the opportunity to do research outside of school, and he was excited to gain more experience and see what working in a lab would be like. His favorite aspect of the fellowship is the fact that it is so hands on. The lab cultures osteosarcoma cells from human tumors and "knocks down" different proteins to see what affect this has on the main tumor suppressor protein.

A personal connection to cancer played a role in his interest in the research, as well.

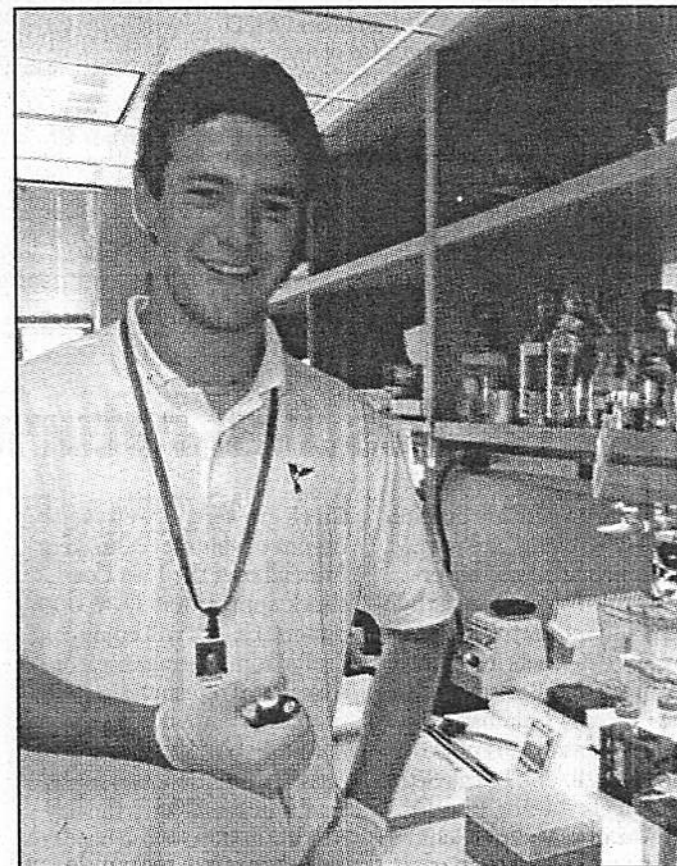
"Cancer research was particularly appealing to me because I wanted to learn more about the disease that has affected so many people that I know," he said. The fellowship provided an op-

portunity to fight back against cancer. "I've lost two grandparents to cancer in the last few years, and seeing that happen definitely played into my decision to get into cancer research."

He has also participated in the Relay For Life of Fairfield University, connecting with others who have a similar desire to put an end to the disease.

In the future, Smith plans to go to medical school and hopes to become a practitioner, as well as a researcher. He noted how important it is to get a good look at the research side of medicine, in addition to working with patients. He is interested in exploring other areas of cancer and disease research, as well.

Over the last 44 years, generations of gifted undergraduate science students from New England have had the opportunity to spend 10 weeks working



Sullivan Smith of Duxbury

and training with experienced cancer investigators in some of the finest laboratories in the state. The Fuller Fellowships are part of the American Cancer Society's current investment of

\$60.8 million in cancer research in New England. The Society is now funding 144 grants at 30 hospitals and institutions in all six New England states.